

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE TORRANCE WATER COMMISSION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Water Commission convened in a regular session at 7:04 p.m. on Thursday, February 15, 2007 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

Present: Commissioners Deemer, Lew, Rizzardi, See, Warner, White, and Chairperson Hoffman.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Public Works Director Beste,  
Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden,  
Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich, and  
Metropolitan Water District Director Wright.

**3. FLAG SALUTE**

Commissioner Deemer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Commissioner Lew regretfully announced that Kathy Keane, Assistant to the City Manager for 31 years, passed away on February 6, 2007, and suggested that this meeting be adjourned in her memory.

**4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Rizzardi moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. Commissioner White seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**5A. MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 21, 2006**

Commissioner White noted two minor grammatical errors in the December 21, 2006 Water Commission meeting minutes.

**MOTION:** Commissioner White moved for the approval of the December 21, 2006 Water Commission meeting minutes as corrected. Commissioner Rizzardi seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**5B. MINUTES FROM JANUARY 18, 2007**

**MOTION:** Commissioner White moved for the approval of the January 18, 2007 Water Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Rizzardi seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**7B. SOUTHEAST WATER COALITION REPORT REGARDING REPLENISHMENT ASSESSMENT COST ALLOCATION**

This item was considered out of order.

Public Works Director Beste reported that the Southeast Water Coalition (SEWC) Report in the material of record, received during the holiday season, proposes a significant increase in the replenishment assessment for the West Basin. He stated that the contention of SEWC, consisting of approximately 13 cities in the southeast portion of Los Angeles County, is that West Basin is being subsidized by Central Basin. He noted that the study did not take into account the mutual interdependencies between the two Basins or impacts on local and regional water resource reliability. He stated that, if implemented, groundwater pumping in the West Basin would either cease entirely or be severely curtailed, that local supplies groundwater wells would cease to operate, and that it would be necessary to import more water from Metropolitan Water District (MWD). He stated that the proposal was completely opposite that of MWD and regional programs that promote increasing local resources.

He stated that this was a hugely important issue for Torrance from a groundwater and reliability standpoint. He reported that West Basin Water Association has met several times to consider options to address the study in a comprehensive manner. He stated that the Association decided to formally ask the Water Replenishment District (WRD) to provide technical information and analysis regarding the uniform replenishment assessment and to encourage individual water agencies and other stakeholders to draft similar letters to WRD.

Responding to Chairperson Hoffman's inquiry, Public Works Director Beste explained that this economic assessment asserts that much of the water along the West Basin is injected water for the barriers. He noted that West Basin has been paying for infrastructure in the Central Basin for the last 50 years because it is one basin. He stated that the report was being shopped in Sacramento, that they did not have an author for a bill yet, and that it would require legislation to change the water code.

Commissioner Deemer received clarification from staff that Central and West Basin Municipal Water Districts was a separate topic, but that WRD represents both the West and Central groundwater Basins.

MWD Director Wright stated that West Basin Municipal Water District would be greatly impacted because they could not sell any replenishment water.

A brief discussion centered on contacting elected officials that represent Torrance, potential impacts on disadvantaged communities, the Urban Water Management Plan, and what would happen if West Basin pumpers stopped pumping.

Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden stated that the majority of West Basin Water Association does not agree with changing the assessment but that a few pumpers requested more information. He stated that they wanted to meet with the

Central Basin Water Association to come up with a list of issues and concerns before meeting with WRD.

Commissioner Warner expressed appreciation to staff for bringing the item before the Commission at an early stage.

Chairperson Hoffman encouraged MWD to look at and counter the report because it goes against many of its policies such as conjunctive use. MWD Director Wright responded that MWD does not usually get involved in local issues but would do so if legislation were introduced.

Public Works Director Beste pointed out that the allegation that Central Basin is subsidizing West Basin has come up five times in the last 50 years. He commended Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich for coming up with a rebuttal in a short period of time and stressed the importance of WRD taking a stand on the issue.

MWD Director Wright discussed global warming and the need for more reservoir capacity due to expected increased rainfall.

**MOTION:** Commissioner White moved to concur with staff recommendation that 1) West Basin Water Association immediately draft a formal request to WRD to provide technical information and analysis related to issues associated with the uniform replenishment assessment, 2) that individual water agencies and other stakeholders be encouraged to draft similar letters to WRD, and 3) that the West Basin Water Association investigate retaining outside legislative assistance and/or legal counsel as the situation warrants. Commissioner Warner seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

#### **7A. IMPLEMENTATION OF LIVING WISE EDUCATION PROGRAM IN TORRANCE MIDDLE SCHOOLS**

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich provided background information about the Living Wise “in school educational program” developed for sixth grade students in the Torrance Unified School District (TUSD) focusing on water conservation, energy management, and related environmental themes. He distributed activity kits that are designed to tie into lesson plans that provide practical learning experiences and resources to save water and energy and reduce waste. He reported that the Department partnered with Southern California Edison (SCE) to implement a pilot program two years ago in Torrance Unified School District and that Southern California Gas Company (SCG) also received approval from the State Public Utilities Commission to implement this program in disadvantaged school districts. He stated that SCE and SCG would provide approximately two-thirds of the cost of implementing the four to five week program in TUSD, and that Torrance Municipal Water and Recycling section has identified the availability of approximately \$20,000 to fund the remaining one-third of the cost. He noted that this would cover approximately 1,300 students at a cost of \$40 per participating student.

Responding to Chairperson Hoffman’s inquiry about selection criteria, he explained that all middle schools would be contacted and it was up to the principal’s discretion if they want to participate in the program.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Warner moved to concur with staff recommendation to proceed with implementation of an interim Living Wise program this year and seek outside sources of funding to implement the program on an ongoing basis in subsequent years. Commissioner Lew seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

In response to Commissioner Rizzardi's inquiry, he stated that the turn-key program was coordinated through the Program Manager of Living Wise.

MWD Director Wright suggested expanding the program to include conservation of outside water use.

#### **8. WEST BASIN WATER ASSOCIATION REPORT**

Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden reported that at the last West Basin Water Association meeting the Department of Water Resources reported that groundwater pumping has increased in the Central Basin and that they have developed a website which provides information on groundwater wells. He reported that West Basin Municipal Water District gave a short presentation on the Quagga mussel, that MWD's Chief Financial Officer Brian Thomas discussed MWD's water rate increase, and WRD provided a status report on the Goldsworthy Desalter. He noted that Jim Waldo, the conjunctive use facilitator, met with staff and is aware of the Southeast Water Coalition Report.

He announced West Basin Water Association's quarterly dinner meeting on February 21, 2007 at 5:30 p.m. and Commissioners Deemer and White indicated they would attend.

#### **8. MONTHLY DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden reported that January 2007 was a very busy month for Water Operations due to 39 water main breaks caused by the cold spell. He stated that other Public Works divisions helped the Department with excavations and backfills.

Responding to Commissioner Deemer's inquiry, he stated that construction has started on the west end of the Sepulveda Boulevard Water Main Replacement.

**MOTION:** Commissioner White moved to accept and file the Deputy Public Works Director's Monthly Department Report as submitted. Commissioner See seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

#### **10. METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

MWD Director Wright reported MWD's rate increase of 5.8%, or \$30 per acre-foot.

He provided information about a new threat to the water supply, the Quagga mussel, which has been detected in Lake Mead. He stated that the mussels are prolific reproducers and get into water pipes, restricting flow. He advised that MWD

appropriated \$196,000 to contain the problem and that the Colorado River aqueduct would be heavily chlorinated to kill the larvae.

In response to Commissioner Rizzardi's inquiry regarding the "bail out" of the Center for Water Education, MWD Director Wright advised that he usually communicates with staff before voting on water issues and provides a monthly report to City Council.

MWD Director Wright briefly discussed MWD's rate stabilization fund and his plans to provide future tours to the Center for Water Education.

**11. ORALS**

**11A.** Commissioner Warner stated that he enjoyed the water conservation class at the Botanical Gardens and a documentary film on the restoration of the Hetch Hetchy at the Gene Autry Museum.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** At 8:51 p.m., Commissioner White moved to adjourn the meeting in memory of Kathy Keane to March 15, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex Commission meeting room. Commissioner Deemer seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Hoffman so ordered.

Approved as Submitted March 15, 2007 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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